A STEAM TURBINE INCLUDING A HIGH-PRESSURE BODY HAVING A SINGLE STAGE OF BLADES

The present invention relates to steam turbines, and more particularly to steam turbines that include a high-pressure body or module and a low-pressure body or module.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

The high-pressure module of a steam turbine includes a rotor of about five to ten stages, with an equal number of rows of stationary blades and of moving blades.

That type of high-pressure module of a steam turbine is complex to manufacture and to assemble, and its cost is therefore high.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

An object of the invention is to provide a high-pressure module of a steam turbine that is simple to manufacture and to assemble, while also having a low cost.

A steam turbine in accordance with the present invention comprises a high-pressure module having a single stage of blades, a low-pressure module, a speed-reducing gearbox, and an alternator, wherein the high-pressure module thereof has a one-piece nozzle. Such a high-pressure module having a single stage performs the same function as a multi-stage high-pressure module of a steam turbine, but with a blade design that is different from the blade design of multi-stage steam turbines, and it is easier and less costly to make. For example, the pressure ratio between the inlet and the outlet of such a high-pressure module may be in the range 3 to 20.

According to another object of the present invention, each module of a steam turbine includes a rotor and the rotor of such a high-pressure module and the rotor of the low-pressure module are driven by the speed-reducing gearbox.

According to a particular object of the present invention, the stationary blades, i.e., the nozzles of such a high-pressure module of a steam turbine are of a profile provided with channels that converge and then diverge going from the inlet to the outlet of such a high-pressure module. This profile for the stationary blades,

which may also be known as "nozzles", is established on the basis of supersonic flow theory. Each such moving blade has a profile such that it limits separation and losses along the channels, and this profile is established by using complex calculations in three dimensions and by using aerodynamics equations.

According to another particular object of the present invention, such a high-pressure module of a steam turbine embodies the shape of a converging-diverging nozzle. Such a shape is characteristic of supersonic flows because aerodynamics equations applied to supersonic flows show the need to have channels whose cross-section varies by converging and then diverging.

According to yet another object of the present invention, such a high-pressure module of a steam turbine includes a moving wheel that is constrained to rotate with a shaft and that supports the blades, all of these elements comprising a one-piece unit. In other words, the blades are machined in the same piece as the shaft. Making these elements as a one-piece unit simplifies both the manufacture thereof and the assembly thereof.

According to an additional object of the present invention, the shaft is coupled to a speed-reducing gearbox. This speed-reducing gearbox has three shafts; namely, two high-speed shafts for such a high-pressure module and for the low-pressure module, respectively, and a low-speed shaft for the alternator. The shaft of such a high-pressure module is connected to one of the high-speed shafts of the speed-reducing gearbox.

According to yet another particular object of the present invention, the shaft of such a high-pressure module is connected directly to the speed-reducing gearbox. Conventionally, such a shaft is coupled to the gearbox via an intermediate component, whereas, in accordance with the present invention, such a shaft is coupled to the speed-reducing gearbox directly. Thus, a saving of one component is realized, which makes it possible to simplify and to reduce the cost of the entire assembly.

According to yet another object of the present invention, such a high-pressure module of a steam turbine is provided with a single steam adjustment valve, which simplifies such a high-pressure module.

According to yet another object of the present invention, such a high-pressure module is provided with an independent bearing. Such an independent

bearing is placed in such a high-pressure module of a steam turbine, in the vicinity of the speed-reducing gearbox.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The invention will be better understood on reading the following description given merely by way of example and with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which:

Figure 1 is an overall view of a prior art steam turbine;

Figure 2 is an overall view of a steam turbine constructed in accordance with the present invention; and

Figure 3 is a fragmentary section view of the high-pressure module, constructed in accordance with the invention, of a steam turbine.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

As shown in Figure 1, the prior art steam turbine 1 comprises two bodies, namely a high-pressure module 2 and a low-pressure module 3, a speed-reducing gearbox 4, and an alternator 5. Steam enters the steam turbine 1 via an inlet unit including a stop valve 6 and four adjustment valves 7. In accordance with Figure 1, the high-pressure module 2 is connected to the speed-reducing gearbox 4 via a flexible coupling.

The steam turbine 1 of the present invention includes the same elements as in the prior art, except that the high-pressure module 2 of the steam turbine 1 constructed in accordance with the present invention is much smaller in size (see Figure 2).

Looking in detail in Figure 3 at the high-pressure module 2 of the steam turbine 1 constructed in accordance with the present invention, it can be seen that the single stage of blades 20 is mounted on the shaft 21. The shaft 21 is supported by a bearing 210 that is disposed in the vicinity of the speed-reducing gearbox 4. The shaft 21 is connected directly to the shaft 40 of the gearbox 4. The shaft 21 is driven by a rotor (not shown). The speed-reducing gearbox 4 also drives as well the rotor (not shown) of the low-pressure module 3.

With further reference to Figure 3, the steam enters the high-pressure module 2 of the steam turbine 1 constructed in accordance with the present

invention via an inlet volute 22, which directs the steam onto the blades 20. The steam then exits via a diffuser 23, which diverges in the direction from its inlet end to its outlet end, thus serving to reduce the output speed of such steam.

The spiral shape of the inlet volute 22 makes it possible to generate a uniform flow at the inlet end of the supersonic nozzle at all azimuth angles.

The supersonic nozzle may be a multi-channel nozzle. The steam can then enter the body via a multitude of openings.

The steam flow rate is adjusted by an adjustment valve 8.

The steam flow can be stopped by a stop valve 9.

While the invention has been illustrated and described as embodied in a specific embodiment, it is not intended to be limited to the details shown, since various modifications and structural changes may be made without departing in any way from the spirit of the present invention.